

RNC 8 Legal Defense Fund, c/o CUAPB

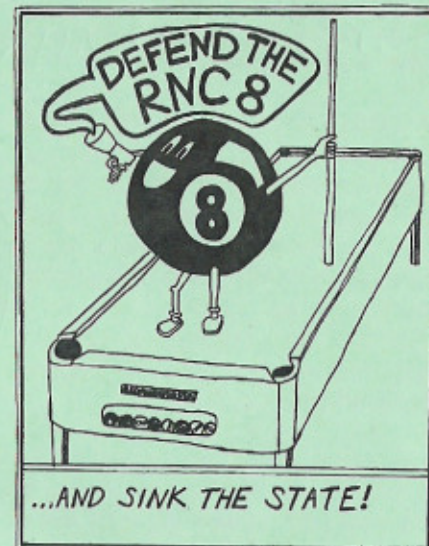
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Minneapolis, MN 55407

Keep yourself updated on court and legal info at:
<http://www.rnc8.org>



Defend the RNC8!

The RNC 8 are organizers against the 2008 Twin Cities Republican National Convention who have been falsely charged in response to their political organizing.



- A Letter from the RNC 8
- Information on the RNC 8 (Bios n' Pics)
- Free RNC documentary "Terrorizing Dissent"
- And what YOU can do to help!

A Letter from the RNC 8

Dear Friends, Family and Comrades:

We are the RNC 8: individuals targeted because of our political beliefs and work organizing for protests at the 2008 Republican National Convention, in what appears to be the first use of Minnesota's version of the U.S. Patriot Act. The 8 of us are currently charged with Conspiracy to riot in Furtherance of Terrorism, a 2nd degree felony that carries the possibility of several years in prison. We are writing to let you know about our situation, to for support and to offer words of hope.

A little background: the RNC Welcoming Committee was a group formed in late 2006 upon hearing that the 2008 Republican National Convention would be descending on Minneapolis-St. Paul where we live, work and build community. The Welcoming Committee's purpose was to serve as an anarchist/anti-authoritarian organizing body, creating an informational and logistical framework for radical resistance to the RNC.

We spent more than a year and a half doing outreach, facilitating meetings throughout the country and networking with folks of all political persuasions who shared a common interest in voicing dissent in the streets of St. Paul while the GOP's machine chugged away inside the convention.

In mid-August, the Welcoming Committee opened a "Convergence Center," a space for protesters to gather, eat, share resources and build networks of solidarity.



Terrorizing Dissent: And Then They Came For the Anarchists

The Election Cut

Glass Bead Collective, Twin Cities Indymedia, and other independent media activists have released a new film, 'Terrorizing Dissent', an exposé of events at the 2008 Republican National Convention in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Featuring first-person accounts and footage from more than forty cameras on the streets, 'Terrorizing Dissent' focuses on the story of dissent suppressed. People charged with "conspiracy to riot in furtherance of terrorism" speak out against the government's campaign to manipulate media coverage and label civil disobedience and community organizing as terrorism. Please help distribute this, along with the other portions of this documentary (available for free download at terrorizingdissent.org) to help expose the repression faced at the RNC 2008 in St. Paul Minnesota.



Garrett Fitzgerald

Garrett Fitzgerald was born in St. Paul MN in 1983, to Dennis and Klea Fitzgerald, former Twin Cities residents and public school teachers. Most of Garrett's youth was spent in Mankato, MN, but from ages two to four Garrett lived in Okinawa, Japan, while his parents taught at the American Military High School.

While in high school, Garrett became active in the theater and worked with local activist groups such as United for Equality-Mankato, and with his high school's Gay-Straight Alliance. He also worked at a local grocery store to raise money for college. In 2001, Garrett graduated at the top of his high school class as a member of the National Honor Society. Garrett went off to college at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, but after his first year transferred to the University of Minnesota where, with the college credit gained from his high school Advanced Placement class work, Garrett was able to achieve a BA in Theater in three years. Throughout these three years, Garrett supported himself as a janitorial worker and also worked to support the U of M's clerical workers during an AFSCME workers strike. During the strike, Garrett was part of a group of students that organized a sit-in in the office of University President Robert Bruininks. This student sit-in played a key role in resolving the strike and lending strength to the union.

After graduating in 2004, Garrett went to the east coast for the DNC and RNC in Boston and New York, respectively. After the protests, Garrett spent six months in upstate New York helping his mentor build an artists retreat. He returned to Minneapolis for six months where he worked at Spokes Pizza (a worker collective bicycle delivery pizza parlor) and then returned to New York for a year of theater training in the Margolis Method. He funded his training by working as a handyman and with local contractors. In May of 2006, he returned to MN and began working at North Country Coop (NCC) and volunteering at the Belfry Center for Social and Cultural Activities, a former community center in south Minneapolis. While working at NCC, Garrett struggled to unionize the staff in an effort to revive the co-op's former commitment to democracy in the workplace. Due to resistance from the Board of Directors and continuing negative profit trends, NCC closed its doors in late 2007 without fully realizing its democratic potential. It was around this time that Garrett performed in his first major theatrical work since returning from New York. The piece, *Idigragua*, written by and featuring Fort Wilson Riot, won 2007 Best Rock Opera in Minneapolis-St. Paul magazine. With the closure of North Country Coop and the completion of *Idigragua*, Garrett sought new work as a substitute preschool teacher and where he, between court dates, continues to teach today.

Letter Continued...

On Friday, August 29th, 2008, as folks were finishing dinner and sitting down to a movie, the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department stormed in, guns drawn, ordering everyone to the ground. This evening raid resulted in seized property (mostly literature), and after being cuffed, searched and IDed, the 60+ individuals inside were released.

The next morning on Saturday, August 30th, the Sheriff's department executed search warrants on three houses, seizing personal and common household items and arresting the first 5 of us – Monica Bicking, Garrett Fitzgerald, Erik Oseland, Nathanael Secor and Eryn Trimmer. Later that day Luce Guillen-Givens was arrested leaving a public meeting at a park. Rob Czernik and Max Specktor were arrested Monday, September 1st, bringing the number to its present 8. All were held on probable cause and released on \$10,000 bail on Thursday, September 4th, the last day of the RNC.

These arrests were preemptive, targeting known organizers in an attempt to derail anti-RNC protests before the convention had even begun. Conspiracy charges expand upon the traditional notion of crime. Instead of condemning action, the very concept of conspiracy criminalizes thought and camaraderie, the development of relationships, the willingness to hope that our world might change and the realization that we can be agents of that change.

Conspiracy charges serve a very particular purpose – to criminalize dissent. They create a convenient method for incapacitating activists, with the potential for diverting limited resources towards protracted legal battles and terrorizing entire communities into silence and inaction. Though not the first conspiracy case against organizers – not even the first in recent memory – our case may be precedent-setting. Minnesota's terrorism statutes have never been enacted in this way before, and if they win their case against us, they will only be strengthened as they continue their crusade on ever more widespread fronts. We view our case as an opportunity to demonstrate community solidarity in the face of repression, to establish a precedent of successful resistance to the government's attempts to destroy our movements.

Letter Continued...

Right now we are in the very early stages of a legal battle that will require large sums of money and enormous personal resources. We have already been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support locally and throughout the country, and are grateful for everything that people have done for us. We not have a Twin Cities-based support committee and are developing a national support network that we feel confident will help us through the coming months.

We have been humbled by such an immense initial show of solidarity and are inspired to turn our attention back to the very issues that motivated us to organize against the RNC in the first place. What's happening to us is part of a much broader and very serious problem. The fact is that we live in a police state – some people first realized this in the streets of St. Paul during the convention, but many others live with that reality their whole lives. People of color, poor and working class people and immigrants are targeted and criminalized on a daily basis, and we understand what that context suggests about the repression the 8 of us face now. Because we are political organizers who have built solid relationships through our work, because we have various forms of privilege – some of through our skin, some through our class, some through our education – and because we have the resources to invoke a national network of support, we are lucky, even as we are being targeted.

And so, while we ask for support in whatever form you are able to offer it, and while we need that support to stay free, we also ask that you think of our case as a late indicator of the oppressive climate in which we live. The best solidarity is to keep the struggle going, and we hope that supporting us can be a small part of broader movements for social change.

For better times and with



the RNC 8: Luce Guillen-Givins, Max Specktor, Nathanael Secor, Eryn Trimmer, Monica Bicking, Erik Oseland, Robert Czernik and Garrett Fitzgerald



Luce Guillen-Givins

Luce Guillen-Givins was born in Yakima, WA, in 1984. At age 8, she moved to Tucson, AZ with her family. She is the oldest child—followed by 2 younger brothers—of a librarian from Seattle and a gardener from Northern Mexico.

She began her political work at age 15, joining a Tucson-based immigrant and border rights group. As her politics developed, she expanded her focus to include other issues of globalization, capitalism and empire, and found that anarchist organizing methods best suited her desire for anti-oppression struggle.

Luce moved to Minnesota to attend Macalester College in late summer 2002, where she studied for two years before moving on to focus her energy on life and political organizing outside of the student context.

Luce was one of the founding members of the Jack Pine Community Center—open from spring 2006 through spring 2008—which provided radical, family-friendly, free space for political and community events, as well as staffed drop-in hours and other services. In addition to organizing as part of the RNC Welcoming Committee, Luce has spent much of the past couple years working with EWOK! (Earth Warriors are OK!), a Twin Cities-based eco-prisoner support group.

Post-RNC, Luce is doing arrestee and prisoner support, working food service, and hoping for a time when her contributions to the struggle are no longer constrained by the legal process.



Nathanael Secor

Nathanael Secor was born in northern Illinois in 1982 to Cecelia and David Secor. Growing up in that endless strip Illinoisans call "Chicagoland", Nathanael spent his childhood observing nature, creating imaginary worlds, and vegging out to Nickelodeon's "Salute Your Shorts". He became active in scouting and before rejecting hierarchy and patriotic boy-cults he attained the rank of Eagle Scout. It was through Boy Scouts and family vacations to the shores of Lake Superior that he fell in love with the Northwoods, a love that continues to this day.

In the year 2000, upon graduating from hell, Nathanael enrolled in the very over-priced yet quaintly awesome Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin. Majoring in Fine Arts and Environmental Studies, Nathanael honed his craft as a ceramics artist and explored his passion for woody herbaceous flora of the area, becoming simultaneously an art nerd and a plant geek. As part of student activist groups, Nathanael organized against Coca-Cola and its role as a corporate partner on campus and against the School of the Americas (SOA). His time in Ashland also gave him a greater appreciation for the rural north, and he caught the DIY fever which has always plagued the isolated timber communities of northern Wisconsin. Upon graduating from Northland with a BA, Nathanael stuck around Ashland for another year working on the nearby Bad River Anishanabe Reservation on a diabetes prevention/traditional gardening project before moving on to Minneapolis.

Nathanael moved to the Twin Cities in 2006 to be closer to family and an anarchist and DIY community, and despite its density found Minneapolis to be surprisingly tolerable. At this point, Nathanael became involved in the local Food Not Bombs which combined his interests in cooking and building community. He also began working as a naturalist, teaching children about nature and later transitioned to teaching preschool. Nathanael was around for the early incarnations of the RNC Welcoming Committee and was involved in this logistical group up until the convention. Post-RNC, Nathanael can be found exploring the Mississippi river bottom for wild grapes, wiping snotty noses in the preschool, or racing through Minneapolis traffic on his Raleigh.

Do YOU know the RNC 8?

(RNC 8 trading cards coming soon!)



In what appears to be the first use of criminal charges under the 2002 Minnesota version of the Federal Patriot Act, Ramsey County Prosecutors have formally charged 8 alleged leaders of the RNC Welcoming Committee ("RNCWC") with Conspiracy to Riot in Furtherance of Terrorism. **Monica Bicking** (DOB: 6/23/85), **Eryn Trimmer**, **Luce Guillen Givins** (DOB: 9/19/84), **Erik Oseland** (DOB: 4/11/1987), **Nathanael Secor**, **Robert Czernik**, **Garrett Fitzgerald**, and **Max Spector**, face up to 7 1/2 years in prison under the terrorism enhancement charge which allows for a 50% increase in the maximum penalty.



Eryn Trimmer

Eryn Trimmer grew up in Takoma Park, Maryland, blocks from Washington, D.C. Nurtured in a household committed to peace and nonviolent conflict resolution, from a young age Eryn had a strong sense of fairness and sensitivity for all living things. When he was seven years old, Eryn's parents adopted a two-year-old from Bolivia, giving him the wonderful experience of having a little sister.

In high school, Eryn became involved with the local Food Not Bombs. Food Not Bombs uses food that would have otherwise gone to waste to serve free meals, both as a way to expose the distorted priorities of the current social system and an attempt to directly alleviate its consequences. At this time Eryn also became involved in City at Peace, a diverse youth theater group that creates original musicals based on the cast members' lives. Through this experience Eryn had the opportunity to process the workings of institutionalized oppressions such as racism, sexism, and classism. In 2002, Eryn was arrested (later determined to be illegally) at an International Monetary Fund / World Bank protest, an experience that would help inform his analysis of the repressive nature of governments. After high school, Eryn continued his work with City at Peace and other groups working for change, and attended classes at the University of Maryland. The following year Eryn transferred to Earlham College, a small, Quaker school in Richmond, Indiana committed to issues of peace and justice. There Eryn took courses in environmental economics and social sciences, with the goal of analyzing both historical and contemporary manifestations of oppression and environmental degradation. After the school year Eryn left Earlham, but stayed in Indiana working on an environmental campaign that made connections between the destruction of the natural world and free trade. It was during this time when Eryn developed a relationship with Monica Bicking that would bloom into their current partnership. Before moving together to Minneapolis, the pair traveled in Mexico and Central America in an attempt to create relationships of solidarity between communities struggling against destructive infrastructure of global capitalism in both Latin America and the U.S.

Currently, Eryn is building his skills as an handyman and enjoys biking, good food and dreaming of springtime.



Monica Bicking

Monica Bicking is twenty-three years old and has lived in Minneapolis, Minnesota most of her life. Growing up she studied conflict resolution methods and participated in many forms of activism to create the world she wishes to see. She did everything from participating in a labor rights theatre troupe in elementary school to committing civil disobedience at protests as a teen. As an adult she remains committed to peace and justice.

When Monica was eighteen she lived in Chicago for a year and worked at the American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker founded non-profit. She worked in the peace department helping to organize large anti-war protests, fundraise, and expand the counter-recruitment program. Afterwards she went to college in Indiana. While in Indiana she joined the get out the vote efforts in Ohio for the 2004 election. While door knocking in low-income neighborhoods she was frequently asked, "Why vote? What's the point? How will John Kerry change my life?" She could not answer these questions because when she thought about it she wasn't sure things would be any different for people under a different politician. This realization dramatically changed her political orientation. She started to focus on areas in which she really could make a difference in the communities she lived in.

Monica enjoys children very much. She has spent many years working off and on as a nanny. One of her favorite experiences working with children was at a school for mentally handicapped children in Mexico. She found that each child, no matter their mental capacity, had a unique personality with their own charm and challenges. Monica loves watching children grow, develop, and change.

Recently Monica bought a house where she lives with friends. Not surprisingly, the house occupies much her time. Despite the many challenges an old house brings to one's life, she is enjoying learning basic handyperson skills and making a more permanent home for herself. She looks forward to cozying up in it in the upcoming long Minnesota winter.

What YOU Can Do to Help!

Share:

One simple thing that you can do is to share the story with your friends and family. Share this zine with them. Email them a post or article. Let them know that there is an event happening in their city. It's important to get the word out that dissent is being criminalized, free speech is being shut down and most of the corporate media is not reporting on it. Let them know how the Patriot Act is really being used.

Donations:

The legal fees for the RNC 8 are estimated at \$250,000. If you would like to contribute to the RNC 8 Legal Defense Fund, please visit our donation page on our website or send the back of this zine to our PO Box with a check! There are several ways you can make a donation: Paypal, check and/or tax deductible. All donations are greatly appreciated.

Benefits and Fundraisers:

Individuals, musicians and organizations from around the country are organizing fundraisers to benefit the RNC 8 Legal Defense Fund. Here are some ways that you can get involved:

To attend a benefit for the RNC 8, check our Fundraiser page at www.mc8.org.

To host a fundraiser to benefit the RNC 8 Legal Fund, email info@mc8.org for more information, or one of the regional contacts listed on the Contacts page.

Write:

Are you a blogger or a journalist? The Information & Resources page contains many primary sources, including press statements, warrants and legal filings. If you would like to get in touch with someone directly to ask questions, or to inquire about an interview, email press@mc8.org

Petition:

Yeah, we know - anarchists writing petitions? Well, using a "diversity of tactics" means we'll even use boring tactics if they'll help get our friends out of trouble. Check our website: RNC8.org for petitions.

Visit our website www.mc8.org for more ways to contribute!



ROB "TUMBLEWEED" CZERNIK

Rob "Tumbleweed" Czernik was born at Fort Campbell, Kentucky the day after Pink Floyd released their "Wish You Were Here" album. He spent the next 11 years as an army brat, living on military bases around the world. In 1988, he spent his freshman year of high school in West Virginia, in the coal country of Boone County. He hikes his first clear-cut, saw his first mountain top removal project, and witnessed first-hand the abject poverty of Appalachia. Upon returning to his mother's hometown south of Chicago, he became politically active with a group of friends. They held a sit-in at their school against the first Gulf war, went into Chicago on the weekends to engage in Clinic Defense against Operation Rescue, and explored the forest preserves that surrounded the increasingly suburbanized, once rural community where he lived.

Attending Southern Illinois University-Carbondale to study cultural anthropology, he became active with Shawnee Earth First!. While working on campaigns to prevent the logging of Bell Smith Springs and incineration of dioxin-laced soils in Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, he became increasingly aware of capital's effect on ecology and moved toward an anti-authoritarian/ecological critique.

In late summer of 1998, Rob moved to Minneapolis to work with Big Woods Earth First! On what became known as the "Minnehaha Free State," the first urban-based U.S. anti-road occupation in history. In 1999, he spent several months on the West Coast climbing trees and helping organize for the WTO summit held in Seattle that November. In July of 2000, he helped organize against a Minneapolis meeting of the International Society of Animal Genetics, a protest which resulted in close to 100 arrests, one million dollars spent on security, and his house raided the evening of the demonstration by the FBI, DEA and Minneapolis police. He spent the next year fighting charges related to that police raid.

In late 2000, he started working at the now defunct independent weekly PULSE of the Twin Cities as a writer and salesperson, while engaged in anti-biotech, anti-klan, and eco-defense related projects. He was also active with the collective food distribution project Sisters' Camelot, volunteered with the Jack Pine Community Center from early 2007 until it's demise and helped fund EWOK! (Earth Warriors are OK!), an eco/animal prisoner support group in November 2006. In late 2006, it was announced that the 2008 Republican National Convention would be held in the Twin Cities. He spent the next year and a half organizing with the RNC Welcoming Committee until his arrest on September 1, 2008. When not fighting the results of the charge, he continues to work with Sisters' Camelot and EWOK!, makes his living as a chef, and yearns for the day he can abandon Babylon and foment rural, bioregionally-based community autonomy projects.



Max Specktor

Max Specktor was born on March 3, 1989 to parents Maj-Britt Syse and Mordecai Specktor. Living in Minneapolis all his life, Max has always felt the importance of family and friends, and to this day strongly values his home and community.

Growing up, he was taught to question everything and to always stand up for what he believes. On the eve of the Iraq war he walked out of his 8th grade classroom, and throughout high school continued to organize walkouts against the war and did counter-recruitment organizing around the city.

At the age of 17, Max attended some conflict resolution workshops put on by Friends for a Non-Violent World, where he discovered that the ways in which we relate to each other are very political and can lead to changes on a much larger scale. With this new insight Max began working on smaller projects in his community, volunteering with the Sisters Camelot mobile food shelf and the Jack Pine Community Center.

In the fall of 2007, after graduating from Minneapolis South High School, Max attended the University of Minnesota. That didn't stop him, however, from studying the things he felt were really important. Max took weeks off from school to go protest the IMF/World Bank meetings in Washington, D.C., where he learned about the politics of globalization and neoliberalism. He also attended the No Borders Camp on the U.S./Mexico border, where he studied the disastrous effects of "free trade" firsthand.

Max felt it was important to organize against the Republican National Convention, as it was taking place in his hometown, but he didn't want to disregard the personal politics and anti-oppression work that he valued so much. Working with the RNC Welcoming Committee, Max was able to accomplish all of these goals and learn many new organizing skills at the same time.

Nowadays, Max continues to attend the U of M, works as a personal care attendant for a friend with Down's Syndrome, and helps out at his mom's café. When he's not biking around town, or sitting in legal meetings, Max enjoys going to shows, cooking with friends, traveling, and catching up on current events.



Erik Oseland

Erik Oseland was born Nisswa, MN on April 11th 1987 to Gail and Terry Oseland amongst the various lakes, forests, and non-humyn animals of northern Minnesota. After a childhood of climbing trees, building tree forts, and making friends with the local deer population, Erik discovered one of his deepest commitments in life: his commitment to the land base and all its non-humyn inhabitants.

From this mindset, Erik dove into high school, where he was confronted with the painful reality that humyns and their multiple extensions (cars, bulldozers, chainsaws, legislation, politics, etc.) were threatening the long term existence of the very earth that sustains all life on its surface. Throughout his high school years, Erik fell in love with music (specifically "hardcore-punk") and the immediate resistance that coupled the sub-culture that existed under its umbrella. It was here he got his first taste of community organizing.

Around the ripe age of 16, Erik started a band with his brother Chris and their mutual friend Jesse. Through this medium and his local distro "Land base or your life", Erik used the shows he organized to educate participants about the benefits of anarchism and self liberation.

In October 2007, Erik traveled to Washington, DC to protest the "International Monetary Fund" and the "World Bank". It was here that he first started contemplating the RNC in St. Paul. On the long drive home, Erik decided it was long past time he moved to the Twin Cities. On August 30th, 2008, Erik was snatched off the street by two Ramsey County Sheriff's deputies (with the help of a paid federal informant) and charged with "Conspiracy to Riot in Furtherance of Terrorism" under the Minnesota PATRIOT act with 7 other local organizers. PRESENT: Between his court dates Erik spends most his free time falling in love, playing music, and working to support other RNC arrestees.